



## News Release

November 15, 2004

## MORE THAN 700 WISCONSIN RESIDENTS DUE MONEY FROM THE IRS

The Internal Revenue Service is waiting to hear from more than 700 Wisconsin residents who still haven't received their 2003 federal tax refunds.

An annual review shows 701 federal tax refunds totaling more than \$479,000 belonging to Wisconsin taxpayers were returned to the IRS as "undeliverable." Most refunds are from tax returns filed for the 2003 tax year, but some taxpayers are due refunds for more than one tax year. The checks range from as low as \$1 to over \$33,000. The average per-check amount is \$684. Nationwide, 87,485 refunds totaling \$73 million were returned to the IRS.

"We want to get this money back to where it belongs," said Donna Migazzi, spokeswoman for the IRS in Wisconsin. "It's really a simple process. As soon as we get a correct address, we can reissue the check."

Migazzi said refund checks go astray for reasons that can vary with each taxpayer. "Most often, it's because a life change -- such as a marriage -- causes an address change. If taxpayers move or change their address and fail to notify the IRS or the U.S. Postal Service, a check sent to their last known address is returned to the IRS," said Migazzi.

Taxpayers who have moved since filing their last tax return can ensure the IRS has their correct address by filing Form 8822, Change of Address, with the IRS. Download the form from the IRS Web site at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) or request it by calling 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676).

Taxpayers can find out if they have an undelivered tax refund by visiting the IRS Web site at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) and clicking on "Where's My Refund." To use this feature, taxpayers enter information that includes their Social Security number, filing status (such as single or married filing jointly) and the refund amount shown on their 2003 tax return. When this information is submitted online, taxpayers see a Web page that shows the status of their refund check and, in many cases, they also get instructions they need to resolve problems.

Taxpayers without access to the Internet who think they may be missing a refund check should first check their records or contact their tax preparer, then call the IRS toll-free assistance line at 1-800-829-1040 to update their address.

Migazzi said taxpayers can avoid undelivered tax refunds by filing their returns electronically or by choosing to have their refunds deposited directly into a personal checking or savings account.

"Undelivered refund checks also occur when taxpayers complete their tax returns on paper and the handwriting is difficult to read. This could cause the check to be sent to an incorrect address. With e-file, that possibility is eliminated," added Migazzi.

Direct deposit guards against undelivered, lost or stolen refund checks. The option is available on both paper returns and electronically filed returns. More than 49 million taxpayers chose to direct deposit nearly \$120 billion in refunds during 2004, up nearly 11 percent from the previous year.